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Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
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COOPERATION IN EUROPE (U.S. HELSINKI
COMMISSION)

August 24, 2022

The Honorable Merrick B. Garland
Attorney General of the United States
U.S. Department of Justice
950 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20530

Dear Attorney General Garland:

I write to inquire about the Department of Justice's investigation into Johnson and Johnson's sale of baby powder contaminated with asbestos, one of the most carcinogenic substances. To date, thousands of women have died and many more continue to suffer with horrific health conditions directly caused by the asbestos, with the most frequent being ovarian cancer. I was particularly disturbed to recently learn that Johnson and Johnson was aware of the contamination of this iconic product and the potential health risks, then specifically targeted marketing toward women of color and "overweight" women. If true, this type of activity is not just dangerous and callous, but morally reprehensible and possibly criminal. I respectfully request that you provide an update on the Department's current work on this issue and urge you to use the full resources of the Department to complete the investigation as quickly as possible.

It is my understanding that the Department of Justice has opened an investigation into this issue and a grand jury was convened in 2019. In my decades of public service, I have rarely encountered such nefarious and discriminatory corporate conduct. I understand that several inquiries have been made to the Department, but no response has been provided. As thousands of women continue to suffer and die from exposure to asbestos from Johnson and Johnson's baby powder, more must be done. Racial justice and simple fairness demand that Congress and the appropriate regulatory agencies be advised of the status of

the reported and an impaneled federal grand jury investigate "whether Johnson and Johnson lied to the public about the possible cancer risks of its talcum powder."

As the Chairman of the Judiciary Subcommittee on the Constitution, Civil Rights and Civil Liberties, I feel it is my obligation to ensure our laws live up to our highest values of equality and justice. I look forward to a speedy response.

Thank you for your attention to this very pressing life and death matter.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Steve Cohen". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Steve" and last name "Cohen" clearly distinguishable.

Steve Cohen

Member of Congress